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(1926 - 1992)

October 14, 2003

Joe Werner, Chief  
Telecommunications Division  
Tennessee Regulatory Authority  
460 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, TN 37243

RE: American Farm Bureau, Inc. d/b/a The Farm Bureau® Connection<sup>sm</sup>  
Case No. 03-00552

Dear Mr. Werner:

In accordance with Patsy Fulton's request, please find an original and thirteen (13) copies of the above captioned corporation's Amended Application.

Please contact the undersigned should you have any questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,

EARLY, LENNON, CROCKER & BARTOSIEWICZ, P.L.C.

  
Patrick D. Crocker

PDCK/ib

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION  
OF AMERICAN FARM BUREAU, INC.  
D/B/A THE FARM BUREAU®  
CONNECTION<sup>sm</sup> FOR A CERTIFICATE  
TO PROVIDE COMPETING LOCAL  
TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES AND  
INTEREXCHANGE SERVICES**

**AMENDED APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE TO PROVIDE  
COMPETING LOCAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES**

Pursuant to applicable Tennessee Statutes and the Rules and Regulations of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority and Section 253 of the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996 ("Act"), American Farm Bureau, Inc. d/b/a The Farm Bureau® Connection<sup>sm</sup> ("AFB") respectfully requests that the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("TRA") grant AFB authority to provide competing telecommunications services including: facilities-based and resold local exchange, exchange access, and interexchange telecommunications services within the State of Tennessee. AFB is willing and able to comply with all applicable rules and regulations in Tennessee pertaining to the provision of competing telecommunications services. TCA 65-4-201.

In support of its Application, American Farm Bureau, Inc. d/b/a The Farm Bureau® Connection<sup>sm</sup> submits the following:

1. The full name and address of the Applicant is:

American Farm Bureau, Inc. d/b/a The Farm Bureau® Connection<sup>sm</sup>  
225 Touhy Avenue  
Park Ridge, IL 60068  
Telephone: (847) 685-8600  
Facsimile: (847) 685-8680  
Toll Free: (800) 362-3276

Questions regarding this application should be directed to:

Patrick D. Crocker  
Early, Lennon, Crocker & Bartosiewicz, P.L.C.  
900 Comerica Building  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
Telephone: (269) 381-8844  
Facsimile: (269) 381-8822

Contact name and address at the Company is:

Casey Wojciechowski  
American Farm Bureau, Inc. d/b/a The Farm Bureau® Connection<sup>sm</sup>  
225 Touhy Avenue  
Park Ridge, IL 60068  
Telephone: (847) 685-8600  
Facsimile: (847) 685-8680

2. Organizational Chart of Corporate Structure: Include any pertinent acquisition or merger information.

See **Exhibit A**

3. Corporate Information:

AFB is a corporation incorporated in the State of Illinois. A copy of AFB's Articles of Incorporation is provided in **Exhibit B**. A copy of AFB's Authority to transact business in the State of Tennessee is provided in **Exhibit C**. The names and addresses of the principal corporate officers and directors are provided in **Exhibit D**. There are no officers in Tennessee. The biographies of the principal officers and any other key technical staff are in **Exhibit E**.

4. AFB possesses the managerial, technical, and financial ability to provide local telecommunications service in the State of Tennessee as demonstrated below:

A. Financial Qualifications:

In support of its financial qualifications, AFB attaches financials as **Exhibit F**.

**Exhibit G** is a capital expenditures budget for indicating type of equipment to be purchased, cost, and sources for funding of projected capital expenditures.

Corporate Surety Bond or irrevocable letter of credit is provided as **Exhibit H**

B. Managerial Ability:

As shown in Exhibit E to this Application, AFB has the managerial expertise to successfully operate a telecommunications enterprise in Tennessee. As described in the attached biographical information, AFB's management team has extensive management and business experience in telecommunications.

C. Technical Qualifications:

AFB's services will satisfy the minimum standards established by the TRA. The Company will file and maintain tariffs in the manner prescribed by the TRA and will meet minimum basic local standards, including quality of service and billing standards required of all LEC'S regulated by the TRA. Applicant does not have any special CPE (Customer Premise Equipment) requirements, which would not be compatible with the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier's systems. As noted in the biographies in **Exhibit E**, the principal officers have several years of telecommunications expertise. Thus, AFB is certainly technically qualified to provide local exchange service in Tennessee.

5. Proposed Service Area:

AFB is authorized to provide interexchange telecommunication services in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

AFB is authorized to provide local exchange services in Illinois, Wisconsin and New York and intends to file applications contemporaneously with this filing in the states of Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The applicant proposes to offer its services throughout the State of Tennessee, AFB intends to provide service in the areas currently being served by BellSouth and Sprint/United, which are designated open to competition. AFB intends to offer this broad range of telecommunications services through the use of its own facilities, resold facilities, and through a combination of these provisioning methods using the unbundled network element ("UNE-P") platform (UNE-P). AFB anticipates collocating DSLAMS and other related electronic equipment in the central offices of the ILECS.

6. Types of Local Exchange Service to be provided:

AFB expects to offer a broad variety of local exchange and long distance services primarily to residential customers in Tennessee. AFB's initial line of local services will be comparable to that currently offered by the incumbent LECs. Initially AFB plans to offer basic access line service, Optional Calling Features, Directory Assistance, Directory Services, and Operator Services, as well as all services required under Chapter 1220-4-8-.04 (3) (b) and (c).

7. Repair and Maintenance:

AFB understands the importance of effective customer service for local service customers. AFB has made arrangements for its customers to call the company at its toll-free customer service number (800) 362-3276. In addition, customers may contact the company in writing at the headquarters address. The toll free number will be printed on the customer's monthly billing statements. The Tennessee contact person knowledgeable about providers operations is Casey Wojciechowski reference (1.) above.

Grant of the Application will further the goals of the Tennessee Legislature and further the public interest by expanding the availability of competitive telecommunications services in the State of Tennessee. In addition, intrastate offering of these services is in the public interest because the services will provide Tennessee customers increased efficiencies and cost savings. Authorizing AFB to provide local exchange telecommunications services will enhance materially the telecommunications infrastructure in the State of Tennessee and will facilitate economic development.

In particular, the public will benefit both directly, through the use of the competitive services to be offered by AFB, and indirectly because AFB's presence in Tennessee will increase the incentives for other telecommunications providers to operate more efficiently, offer more innovative services, reduce their prices, and improve their quality of service. Grant of this Application will further enhance the service options available to Tennessee citizens for the reasons set forth above.

8. Small and Minority-Owned Telecommunications Business Participation Plan: (65-5-212):  
**Exhibit I**

9. Toll Dialing Parity Plan: **Exhibit J**

10. Applicant has served notice of this application to the eighteen (18) incumbent local exchange telephone companies in Tennessee with a statement regarding the company's intention of operating geographically. See **Exhibit K** for the list.

11. Numbering Issues: Statement provided in **Exhibit L**

12. Tennessee Specific Operational Issues: Statements provided in **Exhibit M**

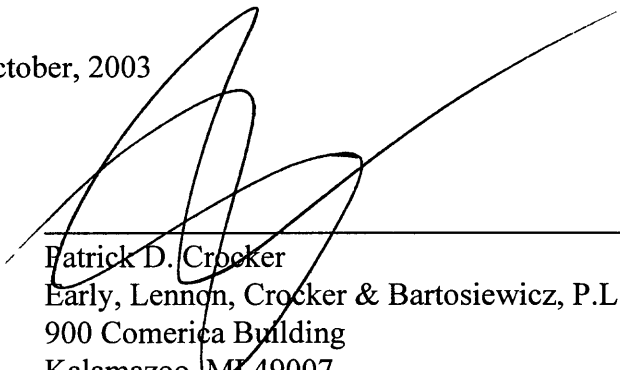
13. Miscellaneous:

- A. Sworn Pre-filed testimony: **Exhibit N**
- B. Applicant does not require customer deposits
- C. As of now, AFB has not been subject to any formal complaints in any of the states in which the company is doing business.
- D. Applicant will file a tariff for Commission approval prior to commencing operations in Tennessee.

## CONCLUSION

AFB respectfully requests that the TRA enter an order granting it a certificate of convenience and necessity to operate as a competing telecommunications service provider and authority to provide a full range of local exchange and interexchange services on a facilities-based and resale basis throughout the State of Tennessee in the service areas of Bell South, GTE and Sprint and any other ILEC that does not enjoy a rural exemption under Section 251(f) of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. For the reasons stated above, AFB's provision of these services would promote the public interest by providing high-quality service at competitive prices and by creating greater economic incentives for the development and improvement for all competing providers.

Respectfully submitted this 14<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2003



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Patrick D. Crocker  
Early, Lennon, Crocker & Bartosiewicz, P.L.C.  
900 Comerica Building  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
Its: Attorney